

From: Tim Utschig
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 8:10am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello, my name is Tim Utschig. I am a student studying Computer Information Systems from Campbell, California. I would like to submit to you my comments on the revised proposed Final Judgment in the antitrust case against Microsoft Corporation.

It is my opinion that section III.J can be used by Microsoft to be exempt from III.D and III.E. Microsoft would claim security concerns in any circumstance and avoid releasing documentation necessary to develop an interoperable product. Also III.D and III.E do not go far enough to open up documentation for Microsoft's secret APIs and Protocols. Without documentation of all APIs and all protocols, Microsoft's illegal monopoly will remain entrenched, continue to gain power and eliminate all possible competition.

Without free, open, public standards for communication protocols Microsoft will continue to put their secret protocols in place of those that are public until there are only two choices; Use Microsoft software, or cease to communicate.

Microsoft did exactly that with their MSN internet service, and with 500,000 subscribers of the ISP Qwest last November. The Qwest subscribers were given two options. Start using Microsoft Outlook for E-Mail, or find a new ISP. This is due to the introduction of Microsoft's secret "Secure Password Authentication" into MSN's and Qwest's E-Mail servers. Use of which is mandatory if you want to read your E-Mail. Only Microsoft E-Mail clients know how to use this secret authentication mechanism. The Final Judgment should be revised to ensure that this, and any future such mechanism will have free, public documentation.

It should be made clear that security does not come from keeping the algorithm a secret. Security comes from a secure design, and making that design public does not compromise its security. Security through obscurity is not security at all. Making the design free and public encourages competition, and that is why Microsoft avoids it.

I hope, for the sake of the economy, that some good comes out of this antitrust case. Many competing companies employ significantly more people than a single company with a monopoly.

Sincerely,
Tim Utschig

